Efforts to get Indians released from Pak jails

†1698. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the efforts made by Government to ascertain the status of 930 civilians, 407 fishermen, 54 PoWs and 2 Indians detained in Pakistani jails alongwith the levels at which these efforts were made;

(b) whether Government are also taking the help of International Red Cross Society in the matter;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) since when the said 54 PoWs and other persons are languishing in Pakistani jails; and

(e) what is the condition of their health?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) Government, through diplomatic channels, have been consistently taking up the issue of early release and repatriation of the Indian prisoners under Pakistan's custody. The matter was also taken up during the Foreign Secretary level talks on June 27-28, 2004 in New Delhi, and again during the Secretary (Culture) level talks on promotion of friendly exchanges in various fields, held in New Delhi on August, 3-4, 2004.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) The Shimla Agreement has committed both Indian and Pakistan to address all issues bilaterally.

(d) and (e) Pakistan has never acknowledged the presence of Indian PoWs that are believed to be in Pakistan's custody since 1972. From time to time, the returning Indian prisoners have informed that the Indians in Pakistani jails are living under difficult conditions and some have even lost their mental balance.

Indian prisoners in Pakistani jails

†1699. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of political prisoners, general prisoners and fishermen

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi

released by India and Pakistan from their respective jails since 1.1.2003 till date;

(b) the basis on which they were released;

(c) names addresses and other details of each person released;

(d) the number of years they were in Pakistani jails and the charges imposed on these persons; and

(e) the number and details of prisoners and fishermen who at present lodged in Pakistani jails?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) to (d) Since 1 January 2003, India has released 34 Pakistani civilians and 93 fishermen. During the same period, Pakistan has released 38 Indian civilians, 2 missing Indian defence personnel, and 623 Indian fishermen. They had been detained on different charges, including overstay and illegal entry. The procedure for the release of the prisoners involves the grant of consular access to the detainees. Their nationality is confirmed by their respective Government on the basis of information collected during the consular access. After confirmation of nationality and completion of the jail terms, the detainees are released and repatriated.

(e) As per available information, 938 Indian civilians, 412 fishermen and 54 POWs are presently believed to be in Pakistan's custody.

Extradition of Quattrocchi

1700 SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:
SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Federal Court of Malaysia dismissed the latest appeal to secure the extradition of Quattrocchi;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the Swedish Principal Investigation Officer of Bofors gave a statement that Quattrocchi should be interrogated in the Bofors pay off case; and